

NEW GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS – CONSULTATION OUTCOME

New governance models

1. Under the new style “strong Leader” model, whilst the Leader is still elected by full Council, it is then for the Leader and not for Council to decide upon the size (up to ten members including the Leader) and composition of the Executive and upon who the Deputy Leader should be. It is also for the Leader to allocate all Executive functions (including, if the Leader wishes, decisions that may be exercised by a single member and decisions that members may take in respect of their own Wards). (Note that there is no change proposed to the way Council functions may be discharged). The law also requires that the Leader holds the position of Leader until beyond his or her normal day of retirement as a councillor (i.e. from when the member’s term of office expires up until the date of the Annual Meeting of Council immediately following the date of retirement). So, a Leader could hold office for a maximum period of four years. There is provision in law for the Council to remove the Leader by resolution (of Council) if the Council’s Constitution permits this. It is for local authorities to decide whether to include this provision in their Constitutions.

Further on this model, the position of Deputy Leader changes. The Deputy Leader position is given more power than at present. As things stand at the moment, the Deputy may not carry out the Leader’s statutory functions (such as appointing or removing executive members) if the Leader is unable to act or the post is vacant. Under the new style arrangements the Deputy Leader may carry out the statutory functions if the Leader is unable to act. Interestingly however, when the Leader ceases to be Leader the Deputy may not take that position during the interregnum but instead reverts to an “ordinary” executive member.

2. Under the elected mayor and cabinet model, the Mayor would be elected by Oxford City Council electors. The Mayor would be elected for a four year term and could not be removed by full Council. The Mayor would not be a councillor and would not necessarily be a member of any political party. The Mayor would have a mandate from those who voted for him/her. The Mayor would be reliant upon full Council to pass the Budget and policies and plans needing to be agreed by full Council. The Mayor would need to work with councillors to fulfil his/her mandate. The Mayor would (presumably) work full time in that position.

The Mayor would decide upon the size and composition of the Executive (which would consist of elected members of Council) and on the executive scheme of delegation.

